

Cooperative Monitoring Evaluation and Research Committee
September 19, 2001
United Churches Building, Olympia, Wa.
Minutes

Attendees:

Helen Bresler, DOE
Domoni Glass, Consultant
Peter Heide, WFOA
Mark Hunter, WDFW
Bruce Lippke, U. of W.
Jim MacCracken, Longview Fibre
Geoff McNaughton, DNR
Pete Peterson, UCUT
David Price, WDFW
Tim Quinn, WDFW, CMER co-chair
Julie Sackett, DNR

Darin Cramer, DNR
Craig Hansen, USFWS
Mark Hersh, EPA
Debora Lindley, DNR
Mike Liquori, Campbell Group
Doug Martin, CMER Co-chair
Joseph Pavel, NWIFC
Allen Pleus, NWIFC
Dawn Pucci, Suguamish Tribe
Heather Rowton, WFOA
Dave Schuett-Hames, NWIFC

Scientific Review Committee Update: Geoff McNaughton informed the group that an Inter-agency agreement has been drafted. The agreement is currently at the University of Washington undergoing review and should be finalized soon. Review work and funding will be routed through the College of Forest Resources to keep overall overhead to a minimum. A list of reviewers is being established but more names are needed; please encourage qualified individuals to submit their name. The CMER committee extended a thank you to Bruce Lippke for his work in bringing the details to together. Geoff McNaughton will find out when the review committee will be functional and will report back at the October CMER meeting.

Domoni Glass asked about procedures for review of studies completed by outside researchers. Doug Martin indicated that if CMER feels the study should be evaluated for CMER use, then CMER would pay for the review. These studies should be moved forward through individual SAG groups and then brought forward to CMER for final approval. Any groups conducting outside studies should initiate their own peer review process and fund it. CMER should only pay for scientific review if they plan to use the study and believe it needs further peer review to be used by CMER. Other ways to move studies forward include going directly to the Forest Practices Board, which is free to review and incorporate any document they wish; the FFR policy committee also has the power to move studies forward for scientific review, with or without CMER's blessing.

SAG Technical Review Needs:

Context: SAGs are responsible for providing context, key questions and contact persons to the Scientific Review Committee. These questions must be clearly spelled out and the contact person designated must be familiar with the study and able to answer any questions the SRC may have. Geoff McNaughton will facilitate this process. SAG group needs follow below.

UPSAG: UPSAG anticipates that the TFW 118 report "Comparison of GIS-based Models of Shallow Landsliding for Application to Watershed Management" to be ready for scientific review within the next month.

SAGE: Domoni Glass informed the group that SAGE has no studies ready for scientific review at this time. She indicated that the RFP for the Eastside Disturbance Regimes study has been drafted and will be going out for CMER review. If, after review, it is determined that Scientific Review will be needed, SAGE will bring the request forward at that time. CMER will be given five days to review the RFP and then it will move forward, barring any significant concerns.

RSAG: Mark Hunter said that RSAG has forwarded a significant amount of material out for CMER review and is hoping to receive comments quickly.

- No review is recommended on the DFC pilot study at this time. Hunter indicated that they used a fairly small sample and variability in the data is quite large. There has already been a significant amount of review of the study plan and it is now out for CMER review. CMER comments are due before the October 17 meeting. Schuett-Hames added that the data is not being used for any purpose that would merit review. When the study is completed, they will at that time recommend scientific review.

Pete Heide raised concerns about what constitutes a valid number of samples and stressed that the scientists and statisticians need to answer these types of questions. The DFC sample size should not set a threshold.

CMER consensus: no review of the DFC pilot is needed at this time but RSAG must meet with stakeholders to discuss management implications and policy must be kept informed (see below for detailed discussion).

- The final DFC study plan has already been peer reviewed and suggested changes were incorporated into the plan. It is now out for CMER review and comments are due before the next CMER meeting. Therefore, RSAG recommends no scientific review of the study plan at this time.

CMER consensus: no further review of the DFC study plan is needed at this time.

- The DFC target documentation provides a detailed accounting of the DFC target decisions and provides a history of the model development. Since it is largely historical, no scientific review is recommended. This document is out for CMER review and comments are due before the next CMER meeting.

CMER consensus: no scientific review of this document is necessary.

- The Temperature workshop proceedings have been through RSAG review, forwarded back to the panelists for review, and are now out for CMER review (comments are due before the next CMER meeting). Mark Hunter has incorporated comments. An outside recorder was contracted to draft the proceedings and no conclusions were drawn. The document simply provides a written record of what was said during the proceedings. Therefore, no scientific review is recommended.

Quinn indicated that we could use these proceedings as an example of Forests and Fish working on the ground. Panelist views were fairly similar and the proceedings clearly point to Forests and Fish rules working for temperature. We can possibly move some of the temperature studies further down on the priority list as well.

CMER consensus: no scientific review of these proceedings is necessary.

- The Hardwood Conversion RFP is detailed enough to be considered a study plan. This is ready for internal CMER review and upon completion of that review, a recommendation for scientific review may be brought forward to CMER.

WETSAG: Julie Sackett said that WETSAG has no projects ready for scientific review at this time.

LWAG: Jim MacCracken said that LWAG has no projects ready for review at this time.

ISAG: Darin Cramer indicated that ISAG has no projects to recommend for review at this time.

CMER workplan: Geoff McNaughton said that there is a group forming to work on the workplan and more volunteers are needed. Jeff Grizzel had previously committed to having a final plan completed by December and McNaughton indicated that we should meet that deadline. McNaughton has been calling and talking with various individuals about what elements should be included in this plan and he has had substantial feedback and quite varied answers about how detailed the plan should be and what types of information should be included. He is compiling these comments and will prepare a table of contents to forward to the working group soon. The table of contents can be used as an outline for the plan and possible assignments can be made to various committee members for drafting based on the contents as well. The group can then come together for review. Many additional suggestions were made during the meeting, including a template for literature review and procedures for logging final documents into the CMER record; Geoff will incorporate those into the plan.

Budget:

McNaughton distributed a new budget spreadsheet depicting how much money is available and where it is going. This is an updated version from the one Grizzel distributed earlier in the year. McNaughton indicated that DNR budget staff revised this budget and, due to time restrictions and workload issues, he has not been able to meet with the budget staff to find out why the numbers in this version are substantially different from the earlier spreadsheet.

In particular, there are questions about the amount of carry forward funding from the previous year, DOE extensive baseline monitoring, and changes in some project costs. There was much discussion of the discrepancies and CMER asked McNaughton to make this his top priority and get the items in question explained as soon as possible.

McNaughton also reported on the DNR indirect cost charged to state Forest and Fish funding. These indirect costs are used to help develop this new program, and to provide DNR Executive Management support in implementing the Forest and Fish agreement. Other Forest and Fish programs (such as the Small Forest Landowner Office) were also charged for indirect costs. The group discussed the appropriateness of these indirect costs for funds that are largely pass-through monies. The CMER co-chairs will draft a letter to the Forests and Fish Policy committee to make them aware of the issues.

Project Budget Plan Review:

Since there are so many questions about the money available for projects at this time, CMER postponed decisions about which projects will move forward to the next meeting. Proposed budgetary amounts are below for the projects that have been prioritized so far and, depending on funds available, some reordering of these studies may be recommended at the October meeting. Timothy Quinn added that to apply fiscal year 2002 state fund monies, contracts must be let by June 20, 2002.

Updates from previous prioritization: The temperature study is no longer being funded through USFWS monies. The UPSAG replication of the CMZ study is no longer a priority because an appeal has been filed by the Washington Forest Law Center and depending on how this appeal is decided, the rule may change. Also, LWAG has requested that the Van Dyke salamander literature review should not appear on the list as it is not a priority at this time.

Estimated funding needs for priority projects (in thousands)

Project	Amount				
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Hardwood Conversion (RSAG)	95	45	45	45	45
Fish Passage (RSAG)	60	200	200	200	200
Roads Program (UPSAG) – 3 projects	100	375	480	450	
Mass Wasting (UPSAG) – e projects	50				
Riparian Growth and Yield Literature Review (RSAG)	30				
Headwater Literature Review (ISAG)	15				
Forested Wetlands Workshop (WETSAG)	30				
Tailed Frog Meta-analysis (LWAG)	30	30			
Densimeter Protocol Development (RSAG)	40	100			
Ponderosa Pine Birds	50	50	75		
Wetland Regeneration Study (WETSAG)		55			
East Side Snags (SAGE)	62	62	62		
Western Gray Squirrel (LWAG)	80				
University of Kentucky Bats (LWAG)	89	89	97		
Totals	731 =====	1006 =====	959 =====	695 =====	245 =====

Discussion: Doug Martin pointed out that based on CMER funding estimates, all of these projects could be funded in coming years but some may need to be delayed for the time being. The budget spreadsheet should separate already funded projects and projects proposed for funding. Duration of studies should be listed and studies that will likely be extended for a number of years should be defined that way in the budget spreadsheet (possibly with a footnote). Some of the studies that are priorities now may be reprioritized as studies that are higher on the adaptive management priority list are teed up.

Project Development Support Proposal:

Domoni Glass said that SAGE is beginning to scope the projects related to eastside disturbance regimes. With the large number of acres burned this year, there may be a baseline data set available that will allow studies to move forward at a lower cost if we incorporate that data set. SAGE would like to contract with someone to find out what data is available for the burned acreage so SAGE can determine what value it may have to CMER projects. The cost would be approximately \$7,000. Mike Liquori asked if the original studies would still go forward and Glass indicated that they would. This data set possibly may allow other studies to go forward at a lower cost overall. Pete Peterson added that SAGE has had preliminary discussions about a need for \$20,000 in project development support next year as well. Timothy Quinn raised a concern that we not set precedents for paying for work that we usually do ourselves. He suggested that SAGE talk with NWIFC CMER staff about any availability they would have to help them with next year's project development. They can bring the \$20,000 request forward later if they still feel the need to pursue it after talking with NWIFC.

CMER Consensus: The \$7,000 request was approved.

Other Issues:

CMER is tasked with providing a report containing technical recommendations to the FFR policy committee upon completion of each study. CMER agreed that we need to work on a way to keep the FFR policy committee informed along the way about what study results may mean in terms of rule or WAC changes. We also need to clearly explain to policy why certain questions were asked. Possible management implications would be evaluated after the data comes in. The stakeholder group can review the studies for management implications. Also, we need to consider what constitutes a "significant degree of difference (up or down) and what truly indicates a need for rule change.

Next meeting: October 17, location to be arranged.